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departing from the spirit or scope of the invention. Thus, it is intended that the present invention covers the modifications and variations of this invention provided that they come within the scope of any claims and their equivalents.--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 6-18 as follows:

6. (Amended) The method for matching an order of claim 1, wherein the flattening step includes mapping one or more of the plurality of characteristics to the plurality of normalized dimensions.

7. (Amended) The method for matching an order of claim 1, wherein the plurality of normalized dimensions includes a set of orthogonal axes having a value from 0 to 1.

8. (Amended) The method for matching an order of claim 3, wherein the determining step includes searching a set of passive orders stored in a database.

9. (Amended) The method for matching an order of claim 1, wherein the determining step includes the step of comparing the plurality of normalized dimensions for the active order with a set of normalized dimensions for the passive orders to determine whether an intersection occurs.